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ABSTRACT

This examination of the reproduction of cultural norms focuses on ways in which the hidden curriculum facilitates cultural reproduction. The conceptual framework outlined in this paper emerged from a five-month observation study of a tenth-grade social studies class located in a predominantly working-class school. During the on-going data analysis, it became apparent that the evidence could not be forced into existing theories of cultural reproduction and a conceptual framework was developed to explain how cultural reproduction operated in the studied context. An analogy of a spider's web is used to depict the reflexive nature of cultural reproduction, with an inner web of normalcy symbolizing things perpetuated by the hidden curriculum such as acceptance of power, authority, social stratification, and the work ethic, and an outer web symbolizing the constructs and myths (i.e., The American Dream), derived from surrounding society. In an examination of the inner web, school sources creating the fibers of the web are identified as the overt curriculum, social milieu, and interaction patterns. Next, student perceptions of the "American Dream" are explored. In the last section, the concept of fair exchange is advanced as the mediating component between the implicit contradiction of the acceptance theme of the inner web and the more egalitarian notions of the outer web. (LH)

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CULTURAL REPRODUCTION VIA THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

Paper Presentation
at the
Annual Meeting
of the
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INTRODUCTION[1]

Recently the role of the schooling in reproducing cultural norms has become an interest of the field of curriculum. The hidden curriculum has been portrayed as the means through which this learning occurs. The determination of whether cultural reproduction is considered benign or malignant depends upon the ideological assumptions used as a lens through which to make a judgement. Those advocating a neo-Marxian position (for example, Apple, 1982; Anyon, 1980; Giroux, 1981) argue that schools inculcate the ideology of the dominant capitalist class to the detriment of the working-class. In this sense, cultural reproduction is equated with the reproduction of class. Hence, Willis's (1977) treatise on 'how working class kids get working class jobs.'

Others consider the cultural reproduction occurring in schools as benign or even beneficial (Dreeben, 1968; Jackson, 1968). Reproduction, in this sense, refers to the socialization of behaviour necessary to function and survive in society.

Two basic questions guided the research reported in this paper: how does the hidden curriculum function; and what do students learn through the hidden curriculum. The data suggest that the working class students involved in the study were learning to accept the power and authority of those in a higher position in the social stratification structure and were learning to accept a work ethic consistent with the demands of a factory or service job. This observed cultural reproduction could be interpreted from either a marxian and/or a socialization

perspective. In a marxian sense, the hidden curriculum supports the notion of hegemony which by definition suggests that the dominant class uses its power to perpetuate a system sympathetic to its needs. Similarly, the evidence could also support the socialization perspective which maintains that students need such skills and attitudes if they are to be successful in the existing social order.

Both the marxian and socialization perspectives suggest some sort of conscious choice by actors at some level. This paper will argue that the cultural reproduction observed was not the result of a conscious conspiracy to socialize the students into some pre-determined pattern. Cultural reproduction occurred because it remained beyond conscious awareness and was not questioned. Seemingly, the attributes reproduced were so inherent in the culture that inclusion within a curriculum was not a conscious, deliberate choice. The taken-for-granted cultural components comprised the everyday lifeworld of the participants. For instance, teachers are members and products of their society and might be unaware of the assumptions underlying that society. Students might accept the schooling experience as the norm and fail to question certain practices.

METHODOLOGY

The conceptual framework, outlined in the following section, emerged from a five month observation study of a grade 10 social studies class located in a predomininantly working-class school[2]. The class was observed two to three times a week for the semester. Field notes, supported by audio tapes, were maintained

for each observation. Interviews with the principal, teacher, and students constituted the second method of data collection. Each of the thirty students were interviewed once. The interview and observation data identified a group of seven target students considered representative of the various peer groups. These students became the subject of a further set of on-going and intensive interviews.

During the on-going data analysis, it became apparent that the evidence could not be forced into existing theories of cultural reproduction such as correspondence theory (Bowles & Gintis, 1977), resistance theory (Willis, 1977, or socialization theory (Dreeben, 1968; Jackson, 1968). Consequently, an attempt was made to forge a conceptual framework that might explain how cultural reproduction operated in this context. The single-site sample might raise concerns with the generalizability of the findings as the conceptualization remains grounded in the data. However, as the students considered the studied class to be typical and Goodlad's (1984) national study documents similar learning experiences, the findings and the conceptualization might well pertain to other educational settings.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In attempting to understand how cultural reproduction occurred in the studied context, it became apparent that the culture was perpetuated through uneventful daily practices. The ethnomethodological notion of reflexivity (Leiter, 1980) assists in understanding the interactive nature of the hidden curriculum. Reflexivity suggests that the particular is used to explain and

interpret the general; in turn, the general is used to explain the particular. The result is a continuing circle of interpretation. What happens in school is interpreted through a general understanding of the social world. The particular understandings generated from school are further employed to interpret the social world. Cultural reproduction is facilitated through this reflexive spiral.

An analogy of a spider's web seems to depict the reflexive nature of cultural reproduction. A spider first constructs the major strands which provide the framework for the web. Gradually, the spider connects these strands with almost invisible minute fibers. The strands and the fibers intertwine to form a holistic web difficult to dissipate.

The reflexive process involved in the reproduction of culture has been symbolized as a web of normalcy. This web, similar to a spider's web, was constructed of strands and fibers which created a holistic pattern. The component parts of the web consisted of the commonsense and commonplace attributes of the students' lived culture; hence, the concept of normalcy. The visible strands included the overt curriculum, school milieu, and interaction patterns. These strands provided the framework supporting the fibers which represent the elements of cultural reproduction. Although beyond the scope of this study, it can be suggested that the other strands of the web could include family/church; government apparatus; or the mass media. Seemingly, the constructs of the web might be supported by the perceptions arising from circumstances and individuals outside

the school environment. The connecting fibers emphasized passive acceptance of power, authority, social stratification, and the work ethic.

Together the strands and fibers formed a reflexive web of normalcy which was used to construct meaning and to understand the everyday lifeworld. Events were perceived through this web and, therefore supported the view perpetuated by the web. Through the reflexive process the particular understandings generated from the school world were applied to the social world. The web of normalcy was used to interpret specific events, and in turn these events were employed to substantiate the web. Individuals were both passive participants and active constructors of this interactive process.

In the studied context, the web of normalcy appeared comprised of inner and outer layers. The world of the particular, the inner web, was not made up of momentous events but encompassed everyday, seemingly mundane, happenings. When woven together into a pattern, these mundane happenings provided the experiences the particular used to interpret the general. Students through their daily personal and group experiences learned to accept the dictates of others. The particular, then, included the passive acceptance of the power and authority, social stratification, and the work ethic. The outer web, the general, contained constructs and myths derived from the surrounding society. In the studied context, the inner web emphasized acceptance while the outer web perpetuated the myth of the American Dream. It seemed that the students were willing to

accept the reality of their daily web because the outer web promised that sometime they would awaken to the American Dream.

In the following section the evidence leading to this interpretation and the creation of the conceptualization of the web of normalcy will be presented. First, the inner web, acceptance, will be examined briefly prior to exploring the the notion of the American Dream which comprises the outer web. The dialectic relationship between the two will be explored in the final section.

ANALYSIS

THE INNER WEB

As previously mentioned, an overriding theme of what students learned through the inner web of normalcy was the acceptance of power, authority, social stratification, and the work ethic. For the working-class students involved in this study, it seemed that a working class culture dominated by a managerial culture was being reproduced. This section describes the learning experiences which facilitated cultural reproduction. In each sub-section, an attempt will be made to clarify the learning that was occurring. Consequently, the purpose of this section is to describe the everyday school sources that created the fibers of the inner web of normalcy. Three main sources or strands have been identified: the overt curriculum; school milieu; and interaction patterns.

THE OVERT CURRICULUM

The official content of this social studies curriculum was modern world history [dating from Napoleonic times]; the unofficial message, however, was the acceptance of external control and power. History was not viewed as the study of ordinary individuals whose life might be influenced by world events or who might be able to contribute to those events. History was portrayed as a given, a static past controlled by powerful individuals and nations.

Power, economic, military, and political, was the predominant topic of the overt curriculum. In most instances the emphasis was on the powerful overcoming the less powerful. Economic advantage, then, was presented as one method of gaining and maintaining power. The moral implications of such actions were not addressed. The following classroom dialogue stresses the perceived importance of American economic power:

> [Field Notes: September 16, lecture/ discussion: Franco-Prussian War]
>
> Student: Where did they [France] get the money? [to fulfill treaty terms]
> Teacher: Probably the U.S., Great Britain....
> Student: That figures, did they ever pay us back?
> Teacher: The only country that paid us back was Finland.... [lists other countries that did not repay loans]
> Student: Why don't we just take them over?
> Teacher: We are just nice guys.
> Student: They wouldn't do that for us, would they?

The importance of economic strength as a means to gain power was considered an important and acceptable component of American expansion:

[Field Notes: November 10]

Teacher: Why was Spain willing to sell us a foreign territory? [Florida]
[Repeats question several times]
The U.S. was going to take Florida one way or another so they figured they might as well make some money. Again the U.S. took advantage of the situation to expand.

Given the stress upon economic power, the students' perceptions of democracy were not surprising. The order of their answers to the teacher's question "What do you need for a democracy?", although rather chilling, could be anticipated:

"money"
"army"
"the right to vote"

The overt curriculum content continually emphasized the success of American power and seldom, if ever, discussed American failures. Viet Nam was not included in the overt curriculum because the teacher stated he had some reservations regarding the reaction to American involvement. Nor was the bombing of the American Embassy in Beirut discussed. However, the invasion of Grenada made its way into the overt curriculum the day after it occurred. The importance of being powerful was reflected in a students' comment on this event. "The U.S. is a big power ... [and] I think it is good that other countries are afraid of us."

The overt curriculum emphasized the higher classes as being important and having control. The role of the working class was usually ignored or down-played. The following extract was the only time a discussion on the class system was observed:

[Field Notes: September 13]

Allright, our class structure in this country is economic. Allright? To us the aristocrats, the aristocracy of this

> country are definitely the rich people -- the Vanderbilts, the Mellons, the Fords, Rockerfellers, the super rich. You have the upper middle class are simple little millionaires or people who earn $100,000 a year or better. The middle class, like your parents who earn more than enough to live on, who have extras for mobile homes or vacations. Then we have the economic destitute -- poor. Ours is all based on economics, the root of all evil.
>
> Your European countries are based upon a class structure. By a class structure, it is by birth. Right, you have your monarchy then you have your nobility, broken down into different groups such as a viscount, a count. Then you have your industrialists classified as middle class, upper middle class. Then you have the working people. So it is based more on what family you were born into than how much money you make.
>
> Anybody in this room can end up basically in the upper middle class in this country. Now, to get up in the aristocracy of this country, the super rich, is something to wonder. These people have had money for a century or more.

Initially, the teacher claimed the American system is based on an economic system that permitted individual advancement, and that this advancement is not based upon social standing at birth. However, he then hinted that the American system is not that fluid as advancement is somewhat dependent upon family status. He ignored who controls the economy through production by only discussing the wealthy. The working class was excluded from the American scheme. Whether this class structure should exist was not open to question in this lesson. The importance of economic power was emphasized and legitimized yet again.

The world of work was interjected into the overt curriculum through an emphasis on 'good work habits'. This meant meeting the external requirements of the person with power, the teacher. The taken-for-granted language of the classroom supported the tired metaphor of school as factory. Class assignments were

'work'. Students submitted their 'work', and completed their own 'work'. From this, the students developed perceptions of the world of work which were reinforced by the expectations of the school. A teacher in-class comment provided a typical example:

> If you get out in the world and start cheating on the job or sleep on the job, then you will be out of a job. The old saying is cheat in school, cheat in life....

The overt curriculum emphasized the external expectations and rewards reminiscent of the history content regarding power. The students were never given the opportunity to initiate and pursue their own projects. Rather, they individually completed their assigned work. The teacher assigned the work, then sat at his desk and supervised. The students were to do their work and be quiet. Being supervised, not a sense of agency, was the accepted norm. As Carolyn suggested, "You don't goof off. I guess if you are behaving right now [in school] then you will behave right then [in work]."

The rewards available in school remained external. Again, students appeared to equate what happens in school to the work place. Grades in school were the external reward, while keeping a job was the external reward for working. For example, Billy claimed, "Like in school, you've got to try to keep your grades up so you don't flunk. In work, you've got to try to keep your ability to work, or you'll get fired." Success was perceived as meeting external standards, not creating internal standards. For instance, the teacher "gives" a good grade while a student "earns" a low grade.

Individual creative problem-solving necessary for a managerial position was neither encouraged nor occurred in this classroom. For most students, this ommission to the overt curriculum was not of concern because they projected their future jobs as clerical or blue collar with little reference to managerial or professional positions. They seemed to accept their present and future lack of economic control and power.

It seemed that the students learned, through the instructional methodology employed and the role model of the teacher, the necessity for a boss and the division of work into different levels of expertise, responsibility, and control. Authority and power were accepted in school because of the perceived connection to working world requirements. Seemingly, the restraints of schooling were accepted because of the perceived similarity to restraints existing in the work place.

The evidence presented in the preceding section suggests the fibers of the inner web were supported by the overt curriculum. History content continually emphasized the role of the powerful in determining historical events. Class discussions failed to question the morality of decisions made by the powerful. Inherently this facilitated an acceptance of power and authority, and social stratification. The emphasis on externally defined work habits also presented an acceptance of a subservient role -- teacher/boss. The selected topics, the knowledge deemed important, and the imposed work patterns all contributed to a passive acceptance pattern. The next section explores how the school milieu presented similar learning experiences.

THE SCHOOL MILIEU

It is not surprising that the students learned to accept authority and power. Schools are generally hierachical organizations where a small group -- teachers -- try to control the actions of a large group -- students. Moreover, the milieu modeled a similar structure where the principal had control over the teachers.

In this school, the first few days of the semester were almost totally given to establishing the rules and regulations which pervaded the school milieu. The sophomore first day assembly focused on what a student could and could not do within the building. As the principal explained, "It is kind of a downer for the the kids. The principal gives all sort of rules and tries to sound mean." The principal informed the students, "...ignorance is no excuse. There are a lot of rules here at the high school because we have 1200 students, 65 staff members." The remainder of the assembly dealt with the rules, regulations and procedures of the school. Only one student asked a question regarding these regulations:

[Field Notes: September 7]

Student: Can you wear a bandanna?
Principal: No. You can wear ones that are purchased but not ones you make into a headband. If you are unsure you can drop by the office and I'll decide if it is appropriate.

Usually, however, students accepted school policy as given even when inconsistent. Another example of the tendency to accept authority, even when unfair, emerged in an interview with Joanne. She described a current policy for bus students that she

considered unfair. These students were not allowed to enter the building until five minutes before morning homeroom began; however, students who drove private vehicles to school could enter the building upon arrival. Seemingly, the students that had the economic advantage of owning or using a car received privileges over those who did not.

Inter: Do any students challenge the administration on this?
Joanne: We've complained to our bus drivers but they just say oh there is nothing we can do about it. [The principal] wants it this way.
Inter: Is there anything that any of you thought about doing about it?
Joanne: Talking to [the principal] but I don't know if anyone has.

Another situation provided a further example of how the school milieu fostered passive acceptance. This situation occurred when a group of senior football players boycotted a practice. Initially the principal, coach, and athletic director denied future participation on the football team to these students. However, the involved students and parents appealed the decision. The principal described the appeal process:

> The parents got an attorney, and the parents appealed the situation to me as principal which is the first level of appeal. And I refused the appeal. Then on Friday it went before the athletic board which is a group made up of four principals, two coaches, the athletic director, and assistant superintendent. The athletic board unanimously upheld the decision. Then it went to the superintendent for a hearing and the superintendent ordered the players reinstated. The superintendent felt as though there would have been some inconsistency in the enforcement of the rule about being suspended from the team if you missed practice. Probably true. I feel the fact that it was a mass boycott by 23....

The principal felt the students had not just questioned authority but had challenged that authority. He claimed:

> Life is full of rules and penalties and when you intentionally break a rule as these young men did, you must realize that there is going to be a penalty and you serve the penalty.... Rather than accept that penalty, their parents got involved.

The principal equated the message with the American way:

> I feel the situation is that everybody has a voice but when your answer is no, you've got to accept that in order for our system to survive. You get a chance to say what it is that you want to say but then if things still don't change, that's just the way the system works and that doesn't mean then that you should go out and boycott or bomb the Senate.

But it seemed that the principal resented the students use of established appeal routes although their use was consistent with his statement regarding the American way.

For the students involved, as players or on the side line, this situation appeared to encourage an acceptance of power and authority. Scott, a sophomore member of the football team, maintained the seniors were wrong and they should not have been reinstated. He contended the coach actually won, as the coach decided not to allow the reinstated seniors to play the final game. Scott claimed he learned, "That you have to go by authority. You have to go along even if you don't agree with it, you have to follow through with authority." When probed he suggested you challenge authority, "When you want something bad." However, even then Scott stated that authority was usually right, "But you know that they are right, really, most of the time."

Mike had a different account of this incident. He claimed the seniors' action was "stupid," but that they won the conflict. Yet, as Mike explained, although the rebellious players were reinstated to the team, they spend the remainder of the year on the sidelines. Mike maintained this situation taught him, "Not

to be rebellious against your elders because they [seniors] were rebelling in a way against school and it doesn't really get you anywhere. They'll get you in the long run, no matter what."

As the following evidence documents, the school milieu exposed students to various types of social stratification systems. In each of these, there was an inherent acceptance of the dominant position of those 'higher' in the structure. Generally, the higher-ups were perceived as receiving privileges based on their position in the hierarchy.

Certainly, the power structure within the school emphasized one stratification. The top down hierarchy of principal, teacher, and student comprised this stratification. As a student suggested, "The faculty run things. You have to follow. Whatever they say is right." Seemingly, those individuals on the higher level had to be obeyed.

The classroom physically mirrored the power relationships inherent in this stratification. The teacher had the larger desk which he had taken great care to identify as his. Student movement was regulated even to the point where the students sat within the classroom. On three occasions during the semester the teacher drastically changed the desk arrangement and consequently where the students sat. On other occasions, the teacher moved individuals, usually for disciplinary reasons. Students did not have an opportunity to select their location within the room. Joanne shared her attitude toward the seating plan:

> I really don't like seating charts. I think they should let you sit where you want and then if that causes problems move a few people around. But we shouldn't all have to move in a certain order. I don't see any purpose to it besides making

> his attendance list easier. I just don't think it is necessary.

A minor but rather interesting stratification apparent to some students concerned the status of this high school in comparison to other nearby county schools. Linda described her perception of school stratification:

> When I am around other schools like Williams and Newmarket I feel terrible.... Williams and Newmarket are so rich that they can get anything they want. But you look at Sheffield [research site] -- well, Sheffield is not as bad as Duncan. Duncan is really bad.

Scott collaborated this perception of the county school stratification, "You'd rather be like those schools [Williams and Newmarket]. Sheffield is not really known for education."

Although not a major theme, this stratification is interesting as it demonstrates the relationship made by students between the social standing of their school and others. It suggests that students were aware of the stratification of the surrounding society.

Another minor theme evident was the stratification of the grade levels within the school: seniors, juniors, and sophomores. The seniors appeared to have and to use a certain degree of power over the other grade levels. The sophomores were at the bottom level within the school. Billy described the situation, "Just because they are seniors, they think they own the school and stuff. They push everybody else around." Again, those at the 'higher' end of the stratification were perceived as having more influence and more power.

The expressed similarities between the role of a teacher and that of a boss exemplified the hierarchical nature of school and

work. Through this emphasis, the importance of the work ethic was embedded within the expectations and structures of the school itself. School was work, preparation for work, with the teacher as boss. As Scott contended, "The teacher is the boss of your school, of your job." A student defined characteristic of working was to obey the boss. Therefore, a student who failed to obey the teacher would be an unlikely candidate for a job. Billy made the connection, "If someone looks at your records and they find out you were a trouble maker, they ain't going to hire you. They are going to figure once a trouble maker, you are always one." Working meant doing what the boss wants, obeying the regulations, and fulfilling external obligations.

In summary, the inner web contained an acceptance of social stratification daily presented through the various hierachical structures existing within the school. The acceptance of power/authority was facilitated through the non-questioning of school rules established by the faculty. Apparently, the students accepted this role because of their expectations of work. The lessons learned were similar to those learned through the overt curriculum and, as discussed in the following section, through the existing interaction patterns .

INTERACTION PATTERNS

The established peer group structure within the school provided the students with a potent model of the influence of a hierarchical structure. Power and authority were modeled through this hierarchical structure perpetuated by the students

themselves. The evidence suggests that this structure invaded every aspect of the students life at school.

Quite simply, the structure was comprised of jocks/preps, middle-class [smart kids], hoods, and outcasts. "The higher ones are probably the jocks. The lower ones are probably the hoods." Preps/jocks, according to Billy, "Act like they are the mighty of the school and that they can do everything right." Patti explained the preps' attitude toward hoods:

> They look at us like we are scums of the earth, and that really makes us mad because a lot of people just don't hang around with the jocks or goody goodies. We're just as smart as they are. Even though we do little different things on the weekends, that you can probably imagine, we're just as smart as them.

The terminology itself was interesting. Preps/jocks were referred to consistently as "higher up people", whereas the middle group or hoods were classified as "lower class people". The students themselves equated this to a class structure:

> You see a really strong class system here and that's really unfair that people who work hard don't really get rewarded for it. Then the preps, they get away with a lot but they don't really earn it.

This hierarchical structure was perceived as rigid; "You are either there [a prep or jock] or you aren't." The 'higher' end of the self-imposed structure controlled student behaviour as it determined friendship patterns, classroom behaviour, and successful student involvement in school affairs. For instance, the student council was controlled by the preps:

> The preps [are] the people who get chosen for king of the court and queen of the court. They are not only that, they are other things. They are the student council. They are this; they are that. They are cheerleaders. They are just the higher people. That's why they get all these fans, these devoted fans.

Further, during school elections the preps changed their behavior. According to Carolyn, "When there are elections, I see all the preps try and talk to lower students. They are a little bit nicer." Through control of the student government apparatus, the preps/jocks became the institutionalized leaders and as such were able to control information, as suggested by Joanne:

> I think it was last year the school had a camp outing. The preps knew about it and they didn't spread the information. Most people didn't know there was one. And as it turned out it was only the preps that went, and one or two other people, but most of the people didn't know they were having one. They found out when the pictures came out.

Joanne described her feelings towards the control of student government by the preps:

> Other students say they don't like them but they kind of wish they were them. It would be nice to have the teachers let you get off easy once in a while, being able to get out of class, and be involved like they are. Because they seem to have fun being involved with school activities.

Some students interviewed believed the power of the preps was also manifested within the classroom. Preps and jocks received preferential treatment according to a number of students. Paul, a jock, described his perception of the situation in this social studies class where preps and jocks can "get away with things":

> With Jensen [the teacher] any of the jocks do. Like Scott, he could. And I could and Mike, we get away with a lot. Gets the breaks. Besides Marcy, [he] gives Marcy a break.

Scott, one of the jocks, claimed teachers, "Sort of play favorites for the different social classes." He provided a social studies example where he thought he received preferential treatment, "I had a fight one day and I did real bad on a test. He [the teacher] just omitted it and said go ahead." Mike also

believed he received special treatment because he was a jock, "[Mr. Jensen] will give you a bit better grade than you deserved. He did that for me for the first six weeks on a test."

Classroom observation supported the claims of preferential treatment received by some students. Certainly, the jocks and preps were freer to interact within the class than members of other groups. For instance, the preps and jocks continually talked during class. The teacher ignored this behaviour for a good part of the year, only separating the students near the end of the semester. However, hoods such as Patti, Jack, or Larry were continually reprimanded for similar behavior.

[Field Notes: September 20]

Teacher: Do you want to bring that back here? [referring to a piece of paper in Scott's hand]

[teacher reads the paper]

Teacher: The Williams football strategy?

[Scott nods and grins; the teacher puts paper aside, returning it at the end of the period]

[a few minutes later, the teacher finds Patti with a piece of paper]

Teacher: Haven't we been through this before, Patti? [the teacher throws paper away].

A comment on the fourth day of school further reflected this attitude. Mr. Jensen was having the students fill out index cards with information on their family and school activities. When he informed students to place athletics on one line, a student asked, "What about band?" Mr. Jensen replied, "I don't consider that it exists within this school." The concerned student, Linda, explained how this made her feel, "It made me

mad, [feel] terrible. I wanted to show him that I'm in the band instead of him thinking about wrestling all the time, that's all he ever talks about." Further, when the teacher made one of his very infrequent strolls around the classroom, he only stopped to chat with the jocks.

Behaviour patterns based upon peer group status within the school created certain impressions about how individuals from the various groups might function in the working world. Larry, a hood, forecasted a working situation where his actions would be externally monitored. The following comments display his perceived similarities between work and school. The first quote addresses his tactics at school:

Larry: The teachers are getting to know all my tricks and stuff. I'm not getting away with anything now.
Inter: You did at first? What kinds of tricks did you get away with?
Larry: I could do about anything. I could walk in the bathroom and smoke a cigarette, walk on out and not even have to worry about getting caught.
Inter: And now you get caught?
Larry: They follow me in and follow me out. Everywhere I go there is usually one following me.

Larry had developed a system to 'outsmart' the teacher:

Inter: Do you take notes or do you draw in class?
Larry: I draw. That's how I get started drawing. Instead of doing my work, I just sit there and draw. The teachers don't know if you are writing or what. They don't know if you are taking notes or not.
Inter: If they walk by what do you do?
Larry: Just put a piece of paper on top of the drawing and when they go by I slide it over the top.
Inter: Did you ever get caught?
Larry: No, I never got caught doing that. You can tell when somebody is coming by. You just cover up the paper and act like you are taking notes.

Even though Larry attempted to control his actions within the classroom, it seemed he accepted his position of being supervised

-- that he was not the person who supervised. Working meant doing what the boss wants, obeying the regulations, and fulfilling the obligations. A third quote provides insight into how Larry viewed the world of work:

> You can't sneak off and smoke too many cigarettes. I found that out, got yelled at a lot about that. Really, you've just got to please your boss or you are going to end up out the door real quick.

Other students perceived they could and would use certain techniques to gain "control" over the boss. Unlike Larry a member of the so-called lower class, these students were members of the jocks or higher ups and as such had received preferential treatment within the school and classroom. They envisioned employing techniques in the work place similar to the tactics which had proven successful in school. The result was a startling resemblance between the description of manipulating a teacher and a boss. Mike described his system:

> All you have to do is listen in class, laugh at their jokes, or just crack on [joke] them but don't be harsh. You play around with them. If they crack on you then you crack back. You keep it real friendly.

Mike continued that a worker must, "Feel out your employer, find out what type of man he is, or what type of woman she is, and then you go from there." As Scott contended:

> People that do good in school and know how to get away with stuff, they'll probably do better than the people who are just there.... You've got to be not really sneaky but you've got to know how to do things. How to act certain times and other times not to act.

These students learned to manipulate individuals within their environment. Certainly, using their jock status, they accomplished this within the classroom.

In addition, Scott maintained that "to make it" in a job, an individual had to make use of "connections, people that you know are higher up there and get started on the right foot." Both Scott and Mike used their status and the teachers' interest to accomplish that in the classroom and projected their ability to continue such practices in the work place. Overt challenge was questionable, as Mike suggested, "If you have a job and if you back talk your boss [then] you could lose your job."

In summary, it seemed that the peer group structure provided an everyday example of a hierarchical structure. Student experience with this particular social stratification provided a first-hand account of how an individual's status position can determine their options and behaviour. In addition, their notions regarding future work experiences appeared consistent with their experiences in the hierarchical structure. Again the messages presented through this strand were similar to those emphasized in overt curriculum and the school milieu.

As the evidence documents, the inner web perpetuated an acceptance of power, authority, social stratification, and work ethic. This acceptance was mirrored in facets of the students' daily school experiences with the same message spun across the three major strands. What occurred in the overt curriculum was supported through the interaction patterns and the school milieu; and vice versa. Again, it is important to emphasize that these happenings were not dramatic or even observable as a pattern to the individuals involved. To the participants they were just what happens in school.

The constructs of the inner web were used to interpret the constructs of the general social world. The acceptance of power, authority, social stratification and the work ethic seemed to be translated into an acceptance of these concepts within society at large. The following quote emphasizes the similarity:

> Inter: In a democracy, is it important to obey authority?
> Mike: Yeah, if you don't they'll find some way to get you.
> Inter: If the government was doing something you didn't like, what do you think you should do about it?
> Mike: I'm a patriot. Anything my country says, if I like it or not, I'll probably do it. I don't really believe I should back talk the president. If he wants to go to this place if he thinks it will stop communistic aggression, hey I'll get up and I'll go for him.

Similarly, by applying the concept of class systems to understand the peer group stratification, the students used the general to understand the particular. In addition, they appeared to apply the particular to understand the general. The importance of money and the related status was transferred to society in general. For instance, Billy defined social class as "the higher class, lower class, middle class" and suggested, "It means that people are treated unequally just because they don't have enough money." Some students easily related the role of the groups in the school to society at large. Ted, for example, contended, "I think that the world might not be divided up into preppies or whatever, but the world is divided up into certain groups, like religions or race." The students appeared generally to accept different status levels for different groups, and that these levels resulted in privileges for certain groups. Joanne suggested:

> You see that they [preps/jocks] are getting rewards for something that you did and that probably happens in real life. You are not going to always get what you have coming to you, and other people will get good things without working for them.

Acceptance of this situation was necessary, according to Patti because, "Everything goes smoother. If you try to rebel then nobody is going to want it that way. They don't want it that way in the higher class."

A similar reflexive process existed in the students interpretation of work and school. The students used their perceptions of school work to explain the requirements of the world of work; work requirements were used to legitimate school practices. Every student interviewed defined the work ethic in a similar manner. The teacher, very much a product of the web, perpetuated the work ethic because of its ingrained nature. Perhaps, because this concept is the most concrete of the three documented, it was the most apparent to the students. Moreover as the Protestant work ethic is so taken-for-granted within American culture it might not be questioned. In this regard, the work ethic might be embedded deeply within the web of normalcy.

The Outer Web

As described earlier in the paper, a reflexive spiral of interpretation appeared to function between the inner and outer sections of the web. The outer web seemed to consist of a basic belief in the American Dream. As will be illustrated in the following sections, the students in this study generally believed that the American Dream was obtainable. Education was perceived as a component of this Dream, and consequently the students

accepted the educational exchange as a fair exchange. In the following section, the students' perception of the American Dream will be explored. In the last section, the concept of fair exchange will be advanced as the mediating component between the implicit contradiction of the acceptance theme of the inner web and the more egalitarian notions of the American Dream.

American Dream

Of prime importance in the students' acceptance of the fair exchange concept was their belief in the American Dream. Several students defined the American Dream:

> A nice house, have a family, a white picket fence, and have a real good paying job. [Mike -- jock]
>
> To make money. [Billy -- hood]
>
> Getting rich. Having a big house. Living in the suburbs. Having a home computer and a nice car. And a wife and 2.2 kids....[Joanne -- smart kid]

Joanne questioned whether the American Dream was equally obtainable to all Americans because of "prejudice and the fact [that some individuals] don't necessarily have equal opportunities." Education, according to Joanne, might provide an avenue to achieve equal opportunities. Yet she forecasted restrictions created by the accepted status level of different schools. When asked if students within her school could achieve the American Dream, she responded:

> Compared to people in other schools [referring to inner city schools], yeah. We are just a medium school. But keep comparing up the scales. Someone from a better school has a better chance just because they learn more. They have the reputation of the school behind them. Odds are if they are from a better school, they are going to be from the majority. they are white middle class. That is all going to be in their favor.

While education might provide assistance in achieving the American Dream, the social status of the school system or school could impair advancement. Other students listed additional personal restrictions that might prevent their success in achieving the Dream:

> I don't know of any, but there might be some. [Neil]
>
> Not trying hard enough. Not putting [forth] enough effort. [Scott]
>
> Injuries and mental lapses, stuff like that. [Mike]
>
> Maybe, some people don't have enough education. [Patti]

It is important to note that the perceived restrictions were considered to be personal short-comings; not a failure of the American Dream. Joanne was the only student who mildly questioned the attainment of the Dream due to unequal opportunity.

Again, all seven target students contended that individuals could become "higher ups", although the hoods advocated methods unorthodox to middle-class vaules.

> I won't be really wealthy, unless I made up with some rich doctor. [Patti]
>
> I would start smuggling drugs or something like that. There is a lot of things you can do to get rich. Get around and steal cars, steal a couple of cadillacs. [Larry]

However, such methods also reflect the inclusion of the Robber Baron within the American Dream.

Still education was perceived as an integral component of the American Dream. It seemed that education was considered a necessary but not sufficient condition to fulfill the Dream. Education purchased the credentials necessary to begin the

journey towards self-defined goals, but as such was only the starting point. Even Larry, quoted above advocating illegal methods, contended a high school diploma, "Ain't going to help you [get ahead] but it can get you into college." Education was perceived as a means out of the working class to achieve a personalized American Dream. Seemingly, the Dream emphasizes individual equality and a non-deterministic ethos thus down-playing class structure. However, by the very suggestion that individuals can 'make it to top', the Dream also implies that there is a bottom. Through this inherent contradiction, perhaps the American Dream itself legitimizes the class structure accepted by the studied students.

Educational Exchange

Generally, the students accepted the educational exchange as a fair exchange because of their perceptions of the role of education in achieving the American Dream. They were willing to accept the power and control of the teacher in exchange for the knowledge provided by the school. The perceived similarity between the requirements of school and the workplace and a belief in the American Dream seemed to foster the acceptance of the educational exchange. In this, they accepted the traditional teaching paradigm (Willis, 1977).

In this study, the students were similar to Willis' (1977) lads, as both evaluated the worth of schooling through their perceptions of the work place. The students equated the requirements of school with the requirements of their present and future working lives. Consequently, the power and authority of

the teacher and the work ethic were accepted as components of a fair educational exchange. All seven target students, to varying degrees, indicated that the exchange was fair. Their comments substantiate the strength of this belief:

> You do your part. You get what you want, what you need. You need to know so you can get a good job and be successful. You can get what you want in the future if you obey and work hard. [Neil -- outcast]
>
> Because you go along and put in your time here, you go along with the teachers and get your knowledge, and it pays off in the end. You come back and put it to work in your business or whatever you do. [Scott -- jock]
>
> It sounds reasonable. Just the idea of it. For example, if students misbehave, they are out and they have lost their chance, they are expelled. The ones that behave have the chance to go on and keep going further. They have a chance for scholarships. The harder you try the more you get along and the farther you have the chance to go. I agree with that. [Joanne -- smart kid]
>
> They are giving you your education for your own use. At the end, they give you a reward, like in a diploma, but the diploma is used to get you places. [Mike -- jock]
>
> Because they are going to let you in the building and teach you something that is worth learning. It is worth more than you can pay for. You should treat them like they expect to be treated, follow the rules. [Patti -- hood]

These comments implicitly suggest that the exchange of school control for learning was considered fair because education remains the means of achieving the American Dream.

Two of the hoods, Billy and Larry, waivered on the worth of the exchange. While both of these students initially expressed support of the fair exchange notion, they had difficulty in always accepting teacher authority. Ultimately they did accept the fair exchange concept. In the following quotes, both of these responses are included:

> [rejection of the exchange] It's not fair because they tell you what to do all the time and you can't tell them whether you think they are right or wrong. Sometimes I would like to tell teachers off real good, then I just let it slide and go on... [acceptance of the exchange] Because you've got to know what you are doing before you go do it. If you ain't got your education, how to do it, then everybody else is going to think you don't know how to do it.... [Billy -- hood]
>
> [rejection of the exchange] Cause they are always trying to tell you what to do and stuff like that. Really ain't worth that much knowledge. I could sit at home and read books myself... [acceptance of the exchange] School's a fair exchange, after awhile, in the future.... [Larry -- hood]

In general and for the future, the educational exchange was accepted as a fair exchange by these students regardless of their position within the peer group structure. Certainly, the strength of this acceptance varied from a passive acceptance to a more strident belief in the exchange concept. The acceptance of the educational exchange as a component of the American Dream suggests the general was used to legitimize the practices of the particular; the particular was used to interpret the general. In this, the American Dream mediated the practices of the inner web because the educational exchange was perceived as a fair exchange.

CONCLUSION

The evidence suggests that because the students accepted the American Dream as an integral component of their web of normalcy, they accepted the existing cultural reproduction. In this, the students were not resisting schooling but were either passively accepting or actively embracing schooling practices because they perceived education as the vehicle to achieve the image of the

middle-class American Dream. Such learning occurred through the hidden curriculum as the learned constructs were embedded within the taken-for-granted web of normalcy.

Several questions naturally emerge from the evidence and conceptualization presented in this paper. One issue concerns the significance of what the students were learning. A second issue centers on applying the web of normalcy to conceptualize the functioning of the hidden curriculum.

While the passive acceptance perpetuated through the inner web might concern some educators; it might, in fact, be beneficial. Generally after graduation, the studied students intended to work in the service or manufacturing industry as workers, not as managers. Therefore, it could be argued that learning passive acceptance provides the skills necessary to survive in their chosen environment. Encouraging the students to question such attitudes could lead to disenchantment and therefore perform a disservice for these students.

However, if schooling is to perform its mythical function as the great equalizer then it would appear the studied students were not being introduced to skills that will allow them to compete in the market place. It will be difficult for these students to compete with other students who have acquired more problem-solving skills necessary for the post-industrialist society. Whether the skills and knowledge acquired in this school or classroom will allow upward mobility for these students remains debatable.

On another level, students will not just be workers in the future but are also citizens of a democratic society. If one considers the basic tenets of democracy, the learning that occurred within this setting is very troublesome. These students were taught, through the hidden curriculum, not to question authority. Active citizen skills were not generally presented to or practiced by the students. Indeed, the inner web of normalcy presented learning experiences which focused on passive acceptance. However, at the heart of democratic ideals is the necessity for individuals to question constructively their elected officials. It would seem questionable whether students can live a passive acceptance throughout their years of schooling and as adults suddenly practice active participant skills. The necessary skills, such as critical thinking, are learned through practice. Schooling should provide opportunities for students to acquire and use the skills necessary to function as responsible and involved citizens.

A hidden curriculum functions in a rather unassuming manner; occurring through the very nature of schooling. It is through the mutually confirming everyday and uneventful practices of schooling that the learning contained with the hidden curriculum occurs. This reflexive nature of the hidden curriculum has been conceptualized as a web or normalcy. The reflexive web creates a holistic pattern that is context specific. Cultural norms are woven around the student; capturing the student within the many fibers and strands of the web of normalcy. Each of the strands represents a major facet of the students daily school

experiences. These strands provide the foundation for the individual fibers or messages containing cultural norms. Each strand and fiber perpetuates similar messages which become part of the taken-for-granted nature of the everyday lifeworld. Because the knowledge and attitudes are reinforced daily and through various mediums, they are accepted as given. New experiences are interpreted through the past experiences and knowledge included in the web. The web, then, represents a reflexive process that is constantly emerging, being added to, or stretched to reflect new situations; but is not created anew or dissipated.

The evidence from this study suggests the created web of normalcy is not only used to understand the particular world of school, but is applied to the general social world. Perhaps the lens through which the student views the world is unconsciously formed through the reflexive nature of the hidden curriculum. This possibility raises serious questions, previously discussed, regarding citizenship education and student mobility.

Therefore, what occurs through the hidden curriculum influences what students have an opportunity to learn within school and can effect their future options. The important concern here is the unconscious nature of such learning filtered through the web of normalcy. The created web of normalcy might be somewhat determined by the individuals involved, and indeed there could be different webs existing for individuals operating within the same context. As the evidence documents, certain individuals classified by the participants as 'higher-ups'

appeared to learn how to manipulate power for their own benefit. Additionally, the site-specific nature of the created web might perpetuate different forms of cultural reproduction because what is occurring is taken-for-granted within that context. For instance, students of elite schools could be creating a very different web than from the studied students.

The hidden curriculum might not be all that hidden as it is constituted of everyday, accepted practices considered the norm. Learning outcomes acquired through either intentional or unintentional learning experiences are equally absorbed into the web. For instance, what might be intended for one reason, might well contain other messages that support notions within the web. For example, school rules are most likely made with the intention of creating an efficient school. However, these same rules might continue to foster an acceptance of external power and authority, an unintended learning experience.

A serious concerns remains how to change aspects perpetuated through the hidden curriculum. If the views contained within the web of normalcy become the lens through which the world is viewed and interpreted; is change possible? If the perpetuators of such knowledge are also caught in the web; do they see the need for change? Seemingly, changing beliefs tacitly accepted as the normal way of functioning is very problematic. Raising awareness holds some promise of change. It would seem imperative that the hidden curriculum be raised to consciousness if schooling is to be a purposeful act. Educators must reflect on the messages that might be contained within such aspects as the overt curriculum

content, texts, teaching methodology, school organization, and interaction patterns. Through this reflection a deliberate decision can be reached on whether such learning should be facilitated by schools. The decision will not be by default.

NOTES

1. I wish to thank Wayne Seller, Larry Korteweg, and Mary Clare Courtland for their thoughtful critiques of this paper.

2. The names of all individuals and schools used within this paper are fictitious.

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